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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable GEORGE ALLEN, a Senator from the State of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, we need You. It is not for some specific blessing we ask but for the greatest of all blessings, the one from which all others flow. We dare to ask You for a renewal of the wonderful friendship that makes the conversation we call prayer a natural give-and-take, a divine dialog. In this sacred moment, we open ourselves to receive this gift of divine companionship with You. Why is it that we are so amazed that You know us better than we know ourselves? Show us what we need to ask of You so that You can demonstrate Your generosity once again.

Open our minds so that we may see ourselves, our relationships, our work, the Senate, and our Nation from Your perspective. Reveal to us Your priorities, Your plan. We spread out before You our problems and perplexities. Help us to listen attentively to the answers that You will give. We ask You to be our unseen but undeniable Friend. Place Your hand on our shoulders at our desks, in meetings, and especially here in this historic Chamber. May our communion with You go deeper as the day unfolds. This is the day You have made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.—Psalm 118:24. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable GEORGE ALLEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE ALLEN, a Senator from the State of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ALLEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma.

SCHEDULE

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period for morning business until 11:30 a.m. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Bankruptcy Reform Act. Amendments to the bill will be offered during today's session. Those Members with amendments should work with the bill managers in an effort to finish the bill in a timely manner. Senators will be notified as votes are scheduled. I thank my colleagues for their cooperation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to direct a question to the assistant majority leader. There is an important mission this week to Colombia. There are a number of Senators and a number of Members from the House traveling to Colombia. I ask that the majority

leader give us some indication as to how he can work with us regarding tomorrow afternoon. They want to leave sometime tomorrow afternoon, if possible. We may have the ability, because of all the many amendments being talked about to be offered, to debate a number of these tomorrow, maybe even Friday. If that is not possible, the Senators want to know so they can rearrange their travel plans.

Mr. NICKLES. I appreciate the comments of my colleague and friend. We want to be cooperative with Members on both sides. We also want to finish the bankruptcy bill. I will work with the Senator from Nevada to see if we can coordinate schedules and amendments and bring the bill to a close in the not too distant future and also facilitate the trip to Colombia which is an important trip as well.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Before the Chair recognizes the Senator from New York, the Chair will state what the order of events will be this morning.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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S1915

of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

Under the previous order, the Senator from New York, Mrs. CLINTON, is recognized to speak for up to 15 minutes.

Mrs. CLINTON. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mrs. CLINTON pertaining to the introduction of S. 476 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BIDEN. I ask unanimous consent to proceed in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, is recognized to speak up to 15 minutes.

NORTH KOREA

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the situation in North Korea. Today President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea is meeting with President Bush as part of his official state visit. His visit occurs against a hopeful backdrop of the third round of family reunions on the divided Korean peninsula. Fathers are greeting their grownup sons; sisters are hugging their sisters they haven't seen for a generation. Grandmothers are meeting their grandchildren who they have never met.

Tomorrow the distinguished chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and I will host the President of South Korea for coffee here on Capitol Hill. Kim's visit will give us a chance to renew the close bonds forged in blood in the common struggle against the forces of oppression which unite our people in the United States and South Korea.

I rise today to talk a little bit about the Korean peninsula and the important role the United States can play in concert with our South Korean allies and other friends to help build lasting peace on that peninsula.

Yesterday the New York Times published an article by veteran defense correspondent Michael Gordon which suggests that a missile deal with North Korea may have been within reach last year. As fascinating as this rendition of events was and as fascinating as the policies were, we now have a new President. The failure or the judgment to not proceed with negotiations into the month of January of this year on the part of the new President is in fact at this moment irrelevant. We have a new President and a new administration. The question squarely now is not whether President Clinton should have gone to North Korea; the question is whether this administration, the Bush administration, is going to build on the progress made over the past 5 years since we narrowly averted a nuclear showdown on the Korean peninsula.

I was pleased to see Secretary of State Powell quoted in a Washington

Post article today, suggesting this administration was going to pursue the possibilities of a better relationship with North Korea and was going to leave nothing on the table. I was slightly dismayed to read of an informed source in the administration who chose not to be identified, demonstrating a great deal more of what seemed to me in the article to be not only skepticism, which I share about the intentions of North Korea, but willingness to pursue vigorously the possibilities of further negotiations. Hopefully, I am misreading that unidentified highly placed administration official.

In my view, there is only one correct answer and that is the one Secretary Powell has indicated today. For it would be irresponsible not to explore to discover whether North Korea is prepared to abandon its pursuit of long-range missiles in response to a serious proposal from the United States, our friends, and our allies.

North Korea confronts the United States with a number of security challenges. North Korea maintains a huge army of more than 1 million men and women in uniform, about 5 percent of its entire population. Many of that army are poised on the South Korean border. The threat that North Korea opposes extends well beyond the Korean peninsula. Its Nodong missile can not only strike all of South Korea but can also threaten our ally, Japan. North Korea sells those same missiles to anyone who has the cash to buy them. North Korean missile exports to Iran and Pakistan have guaranteed, unfortunately, that any future war in the Middle East or South Asia will be even more dangerous and more destructive than past conflicts in that region.

North Korean missiles and the very real concern that North Korea might even build longer range missiles capable of striking the United States are a driving force behind our plans to build a national missile defense system.

If we can remove that threat, that is, the threat from North Korea long-range missile possibility, the impact will be huge, not only on the security of Northeast Asia but also on our own defense strategy as we debate how best to deal with our vulnerability to weapons of mass destruction.

For most of the past 50 years, U.S. soldiers of the 2d Infantry Division have looked north from their positions along the DMV at North Korean adversaries that appeared unchanging—a hermit kingdom, locked in a Stalinist time warp. Indeed, 2 or 3 years ago if I had spoken to the American people about landmines, the 38th parallel, and the armies of North and South Korea, it would have been to discuss the latest northern incursion along what remains the most heavily armed border in the world. The troops of the 2d Infantry Division are still standing shoulder to shoulder with our South Korean allies. The landmines are still there. And much of the tension along the DMZ remains unabated, at least for now.

But maybe, just maybe, things are beginning to change.

The United States should end our "prevent defense" and go on the offensive to advance our vital interests—particularly the dismantlement of North Korea's long-range missile program. Now is not the time for lengthy policy reviews or foot-dragging on existing commitments. Now is the time to forge ahead and test North Korea's commitment to peace.

A few weeks ago what had been unthinkable—the opening of direct rail transport across the DMZ—became a near term achievable objective. The militaries of North and South Korea will soon begin to reconstruct the rail links connecting Seoul not only to Pyongyang, but also to China, Russia, and Western Europe.

I remember vividly the moment when the people of East and West Berlin decided to tear down the Berlin Wall.

The Berlin Wall had become a true anachronism: a graffiti-strewn relic of a morally, politically, and economically bankrupt Soviet regime. Once the East German people had torn down the ideological walls in their own minds, tearing down the concrete was a piece of cake.

The people of North and South Korea are not there yet. But the walls are under siege. The establishment of direct rail links will represent a major breach in the walls of fear, insecurity, and isolation which have built up over the past 50 years.

Last October, I spoke to this body about testing North Korea's willingness to abandon its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. At that time, I pointed to some of the hopeful signs that North Korea was interested in improving its relations with its neighbors—a missile launch moratorium now more than 2 years old, summit meetings with South Korea, Russia, and China, and the first tentative steps toward economic reform.

I attributed these North Korean actions to the "Sunshine Policy" crafted by South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, and to the hard-headed engagement strategy implemented by former Secretary of Defense William Perry on behalf of the Clinton administration.

Since last fall, evidence has mounted steadily that North Korea's leader Kim Jong-il has indeed decided that nothing short of a major overhaul of his economic system and diplomatic relations is likely to pull his country back from the brink of starvation and economic collapse.

In addition to the progress on rail links, here are some of the other recent developments:

North Korea has expanded cooperation to search for the remains of Americans missing in action from the Korean war. Uniformed U.S. military personnel are working along side their North Korean counterparts, searching the rice paddies, often in remote areas, in an effort to solve 50-year-old mysteries.